



# ELECTION NEWS

A special informational bulletin on the implementation of Michigan's new "consolidated elections" legislation

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Michigan Department of State - Terri Lynn Land, Secretary of State

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## **In This Issue ...**

This issue of *Election News* features information on the following topics:

- Reimbursement for Costs Related to the Conduct of School Elections
- March 3 Consolidated Elections Conference Scheduled in Lansing

## **Reimbursement for Costs Related to the Conduct of School Elections**

Local school districts, intermediate school districts and community college districts are required to reimburse any expenses incurred by a county, city or township when conducting a regular or special election on behalf of the district. If a regular or special school election is held in conjunction with another election conducted by the county or local jurisdictions involved, the local school district, intermediate school district or community college district is responsible for any added costs attributable to the conduct of the district's regular or special election. If a regular or special school election is not held in conjunction with another election conducted by the county or local jurisdictions involved, the district is responsible for 100% of the costs attributable to the conduct of the district's regular or special election. (*MCL 168.315 as amended under PA 302 of 2003*)

***Reimbursement procedure:*** To initiate the reimbursement process, the county and local jurisdictions are required to provide the school board with "a verified account of actual costs" associated with the conduct of the district's regular or special election no later than the 84th day after the date of the election. Upon the receipt of a reimbursement request, the school board must "pay or disapprove all or a portion of the verified account" within 84 days. (*MCL 168.315 as amended under PA 302 of 2003*)

***Requesting review of disapproved costs:*** Upon the request of a county, city or township, the school board is required to review any disapproved costs with the county, city or township. (*MCL 168.315 as amended under PA 302 of 2003*)

***Reimbursement standards:*** When preparing reimbursement requests for the conduct of school district elections, counties and local jurisdictions must observe the standards established by the Department of State under MCL 168.487 for the reimbursement of costs associated with the conduct of statewide special elections. (*MCL 168.315 as amended under PA 302 of 2003*) MCL 168.487 stipulates that reimbursable costs do not include the "salaries of permanent local officials" or the "cost of reusable supplies and equipment."

***Reimbursement claim form:*** A suggested reimbursement claim form is available on the Department of State's website <[www.michigan.gov/sos](http://www.michigan.gov/sos)>. To locate the form, click on "Elections in Michigan"; on the Elections in Michigan page, click on "Information for Election Administrators." The claim form can be accessed under the "Election Resources" section in the middle of the page.

***Examples of reimbursable costs:*** The following lists a variety of election related costs which can be claimed for reimbursement:

- Costs associated with the production of ballots.
- Rental charges for buildings used to establish polling places.
- The cost of supplies and postage.
- Fees for janitorial services.
- The cost of publishing close of registration and election notices.
- Travel and transportation expenses associated with the election.
- Fees for equipment rentals.
- Wages or per diem payments made to canvassers, precinct inspectors and temporary employees.
- Election overtime or extra compensation paid to regular employees or officials for handling the school district's election if it is the jurisdiction's standard practice to pay overtime or extra compensation to regular employees or officials for handling elections. (Such payments must be authorized as appropriate.)
- Any other miscellaneous expenses associated with the election.

***Example of costs which are not reimbursable:*** The following lists several costs which cannot be claimed for reimbursement:

- Compensation paid to regular employees or officials (except as noted above with respect to "overtime" and "additional compensation").
- The cost of new equipment (capital outlay).
- The cost of reusable supplies or equipment.

### **March 3 Consolidated Elections Conference Scheduled in Lansing**

We are pleased to announce that the Department of State's Bureau of Elections will be offering a one-day Consolidated Elections Conference on Thursday, March 3, 2005. The conference will

be held at the Lansing Center, located at 333 E. Michigan Avenue, Lansing Michigan. Secretary of State Terri Lynn Land will welcome conference attendees at a morning session which will begin at 9:30 a.m. The conference will assist those responsible for the conduct of school district elections gain a better understanding of Michigan's new "consolidated elections" laws. Practical suggestions for implementing the new requirements will also be offered.

**Who should attend:** It is strongly recommended that you attend the March 3 conference if any of the following apply:

- You are a county, city or township clerk who is serving as a "school election coordinator."
- You are a city or township clerk who has "opted in" and will be responsible for conducting school district elections in your city or township.
- You are a city or township clerk who has accepted delegated duties associated with the conduct of school district elections.

County, city and township clerks who do not fit one of the profiles listed above are free to attend the conference at their discretion. The conference is not intended for election inspectors.

**RSVP requested:** If you plan to attend, please contact Sandy Prenger at (517) 335-5141 or Lydia Valles at (517) 241-4662 no later than February 24, 2005 and provide the name of the county, city or township that you will be representing and the number of attendees in your group.

**Agenda available:** The conference agenda can be accessed on the Department of State's website <[www.michigan.gov/sos](http://www.michigan.gov/sos)>. To locate the agenda, click on "Elections in Michigan"; on the Elections in Michigan page, click on "Information for Election Administrators." The agenda can be accessed under the "Training" section in the middle of the page.

**Invitations mailed February 16; agenda correction:** An invitation to the March 3 conference and a copy of the agenda were mailed to all county, city and township clerks on February 16, 2005.

Please note that the agenda mailed to all clerks on February 16 erroneously lists Laurie Breuker as the President of the United County Officers Association. Ms. Breuker is, in fact, the President of the Michigan Association of County Clerks. Mike Welsch is the President of the United County Officers Association. We regret any confusion created by the error.